

[The Arizona Republic](#)

Two Arizona Congress members are in Israel this week.

Rep. **Harry Mitchell**, D-Ariz., is looking forward to meeting with Israeli Prime Minister **Benjamin Netanyahu**

, President

Shimon Peres

and other officials and visiting the Golan Heights, Gaza Strip and Jordan Valley.

"I had the privilege of visiting Israel in 2005 prior to serving in Congress, just weeks after the Gaza pullout, and there has never been a time in the history of our countries in which the security of one is so vital to the other," Mitchell said. "I believe that a stable and secure Middle East is one of the most important factors towards ensuring strong national security at home. I am interested in learning more about Israel's terrorism fighting techniques as well as having discussions on the Israeli and Palestinian political climate and the prospects for peace."

Rep. **Ann Kirkpatrick**, D-Ariz., who sits on the [House Homeland Security Committee](#), also hopes to glean some tips from the Israelis about how guard against the threat of international terrorism.

"The priority of our government must be protecting our communities and securing our country," Kirkpatrick said. "People here have been on the frontlines in fighting terrorism for decades, and they are without a doubt the most experienced in the field. There is a great deal we can learn from them."

The American Israel Education Fund is paying for the Israel trip.